

## Revelation 21:1-8 | All Things New

### Introduction

This passage essentially represents the reversal of the fall and curse in Genesis 3 and the reconciliation/recreation of all things through Christ.

### Verse-By-Verse Notes

#### Verse 1

- “The first heaven and the first earth had passed away” – see Revelation 20:11.
- “No more sea” – Interpreters differ on the meaning of the phrase. The earth is 75% water. Should John be understood *literally* in that the new earth will have no significant bodies of water (oceans) or does this have a more symbolic meaning?
  - There are over 600 biblical references to water. Throughout Scripture, the sea represents the uncontrollable chaos that only God alone can subdue. It is also depicted as essential for life, and a means of judgment and cleansing.
  - It is more likely that John’s reference to “no more sea” signifies the passing away of all that is contrary to the tranquility of the new creation. See Isaiah 57:20; Revelation 13:1, 6-7). Though, it is also possible that John should be taken literally and there will be “*no more sea*.”

#### Verses 2-4

- The New Jerusalem descends and represents God’s intention to dwell with His people forever. From the very beginning in Eden, God’s desire has been to dwell among His creation (Genesis 3:8; Leviticus 26:11-12; Ezekiel 37:26-28), so the new creation/New Jerusalem is fundamentally the fulfillment of that desire.
- Sin, Satan, and death will be no more (again, it is possible to understand the phrase “no more sea” as a reference to all that is opposed to God), and God will dwell in happy, unbroken, and undiminished fellowship with His people forever.

#### Verses 5-7

- “The one seated on the throne” is certainly Jesus (see 20:11), and God speaks through Christ (Hebrews 1:1-3).
- “Trustworthy and true . . . It is done . . .” – The new creation is the ultimate consummation of Christ’s redemptive work.
- “Heritage” – The final state of unbroken relationship with God is awarded to those who persevere in the faith. Perseverance is a dominant theme in the New Testament, and the power to persevere comes through the grace of God (see Philippians 1:6; Jude 24-25)

## Verse 8

- Those who will *not* inherit the new creation. Notice the first John mentions is “the cowardly” (i.e., those who fail to conquer). It is also possible that “all eight classes of people mentioned in the verse may refer to professing believers who have apostatized.” (Robert Mounce)
- The Christian life is one of fearless bravery. Cowardice is a significant problem in the church today as many Christians are unwilling to stand boldly for Christ in our depraved culture.
- The “lake of fire” is the final judgment, the second death.

**BIG IDEA: “This passage is all about the fulfillment of God’s Old Testament promises and the completion of the story of the world. The story of the world is not a tragedy that ends in death and shame but a comedy that ends in cosmic renewal and the marriage of the Lamb and his bride. The new exodus is finally consummated, the return from exile completed, and God tabernacles among his people.”<sup>1</sup> Jim Hamilton**

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<sup>1</sup> James M. Hamilton Jr., *Preaching the Word: Revelation—The Spirit Speaks to the Churches*, ed. R. Kent Hughes (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 382.